

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 02012 101109Z

43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 IO-14 /149 W

----- 028705

R 100930Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6103

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TELAVIV

S E C R E T CAIRO 2012

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG US UR

SUBJECT: TASS CORRESPONDENT'S VIEW OF ME ISSUES

REF A. CAIRO 1694; B. CAIRO 1919

1. DURING APRIL 9 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, DEPUTY TASS DIRECTOR YEDRASHNIKOV COMMENTED ON PRESENT STATE AND PROBABLE FUTURE OF SOVIET/EGYPTIAN RELATIONS. YEDRASHNIKOV NOTED EGYPTIANS HAD RECENTLY GONE OUT OF THEIR WAY TO PUBLICLY EXPRESS THEIR IRRITATION AT USSR, AND SAID THAT IT APPEARED THAT RELATIONSHIP WOULD DETERIORATE FURTHER, AT LEAST FOR THE NEXT TWO OR THREE MONTHS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOVIETS HAD CUT OFF ARMS SUPPLIES TO EGYPT, AND SAID HE THOUGHT THIS TOOK PLACE BEFORE GROMYKO'S VISIT IN MARCH. PRESENT RELATIONSHIP WAS CHARACTERIZED BY MAJOR PRESS ATTACKS ON SOVIET POLICY AND BY MINOR IRRITANTS: TWO OF THESE INVOLVED RECENT SOVIET DELEGATIONS TO EGYPT, ONE AIMED AT SEEKING DEVELOPMENT WORK ALONG SUEZ CANAL, THE OTHER A STUDENT GROUP. IN FIRST INSTANCE, SOVIETS HAD BEEN NOTIFIED BY GOE THAT ANY ECONOMIC DELEGATION THEY WISHED TO SEND TO EGYPT WOULD BE WELCOME, BUT EGYPTIANS GAVE NO INDICATION THAT SUEZ CANAL CLEARANCE HAD ALREADY BEEN "GIVEN"

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 02012 101109Z

TO US-THIS-, SAID YEDRASHNIKOV, HAD COME AS SOMETHING OF A

SHOCK TO GROUP OF SOVIET TECHNICAL EXPERTS WHEN THEY ARRIVED IN CAIRO SEVERAL WEEKS AGO(REFTEL A), IN ANY CASE, YEDRASHNIKOV SAID USSR STILL SAW SOME ROOM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES ALONG SUEZ CANAL, ALTHOUGH NL FIRM PROPOSAL HAD YET BEEN MADE TO GOE. SECOND INSTANCE WAS THAT OF STUDENT DELEGATION WHICH ARRIVED IN ALEXANDRIA A WEEK AGO TO ATTEND STUDENT CONFERENCE HOSTED BY GOE(REFTEL B). SOVIET DELEGATION HAD ONLY INTENDED TO STAY FOR TWO DAYS, BUT ON ITS DEPARTURE CAIRO PRESS HAD MADE OF ITS "SUMMONS" TO RETURN TO MOSCOW FOLLOWING SADAT'S SPEECH OF APRIL 3.

2. YEDRASHNIKOV MADE POINT THAT DESPITE PRESENT DECLINING STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN USSR AND EGYPT, MOSCOW WAS BEGINNING TO REALIZE THAT THIS WAS NOT BEING FUELED BY US ACTIVITIES IN EGYPT OR ELSEWHERE IN AREA: IN THIS REGARD, HE SAID, SECRETARY KISSINGER'S TALKS IN MOSCOW HAD APPARENTLY DONE MUCH TO STILL SOVIET SUSPICIONS THAT US WAS DIRECTLY BEHIND SOVIET DECLINE. CURRENT SOVIET VIEW WAS THAT THIS WAS NATURAL EVENT RESULTING FROM US EFFORT TO ACHIEVE SETTLEMENT, BUT ESSENTIALLY A TEMPORARY ONE WHICH WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY AN IMPROVEMENT IN BILATERAL SOVIET-ARAB TIES.

3. YEDRASHNIKOV HEDGED ON QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT BREZHNEV MIGHT PAY VISIT TO EGYPT WITHIN COMING WEEKS. HE STATED THAT INVITATION WAS OPEN FOR BREZHNEV TO COME, BUT ADDED THAT NO DECISION HAD BEEN MADE. SUCH A VISIT WOULD DEPEND ON STATE OF THE EGYPTIAN/SOVIET RELATIONSHIP AT TIME DECISION WAS MADE.

4. YEDRASHNIKOV SAID THAT RUMORS IN CAIRO TO THE CONTRARY, PROBABLY NO MORE THAN SEVERAL DOZEN EGYPTIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL HAD GONE TO SYRIA IN RECENT WEEKS. HE HAD NO IDEA AS TO THEIR PURPOSE.  
EILTS

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## Message Attributes

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